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Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters

Strengthening of the United Nations system

Security Council
Sixtieth year

Letter dated 22 February 2005 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

It is my pleasure to submit to you herewith the ideas that Colonel Muammar Al-Qaddafi, Leader of Great Al-Fatih Revolution, has put forward concerning the issue of the reform of the United Nations (see annex), and furthermore to request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ahmed A. **Own**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 22 February 2005 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Arabic]

Proposal by Colonel Muammar Qaddafi, Leader of the Great Al-Fatih Revolution, concerning the reform of the United Nations

There is much debate these days on a global level about reform and democracy, both cherished ideals, rejected only by dictators or reactionaries. Dictators reject democracy, and reactionaries reject reform. However, these ideals become unacceptable to all if they are raised for propaganda purposes, or applied selectively, in other words, when used as a pretext to achieve aims other than reform or democracy.

Indeed if we are genuinely serious about reform and democracy on a global level, we must begin with the reform of the world's highest organization, and establish democracy within it. This supreme organization is the United Nations, and its General Assembly is the world's parliament. Unless we reform this parliament and democratize it, any request to reform or democratize any national parliament, or national government, anywhere in the world, will not be heeded. The question is: How do we reform the United Nations General Assembly (the World Parliament), and render it democratic? The answer is quite obvious. It simply lies in granting this organ the same powers as those of any congress (parliament) in any traditional democratic country; namely to make this organ a legislative body, the Security Council an executive body, and the International Court of Justice the judicial authority.

In fact, a radical and serious approach to reform would require the transfer of the powers of the Security Council to the General Assembly, so that the resolutions of the latter become binding, rather than those of the Security Council. This is because the General Assembly is a global sanctuary and forum, as all Member States, large and small, are represented equally in the General Assembly, unlike the case of the Security Council in its present form. However, without reforms, they are devoid of any real authority. What use, therefore, is this "equality"? In fact, what is the value of the General Assembly itself, if it is merely a "decorative" organ? What is the difference between the United Nations General Assembly and Hyde Park in London, if the General Assembly is merely a forum for oratory, resembling the pre-Islamic forum held in Mecca, known as Suq Ukath (the Market of Ukath), in which Arab poets gathered to recite their poems of praise or defamation?

The Security Council must therefore be turned into an executive tool for the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. Unless this is realized, the General Assembly should be abolished, and all the costs and expenses incurred by the host country and the Member States should be saved. The Security Council would be retained in a sufficiently expanded form. Its new powers and new membership should be reviewed, and the decisions made by the International Court of Justice must be respected. Those who oppose this radical approach to reform of the United Nations would lack any credibility when they criticize a country whose parliament has no genuine legislative powers, or claim that a certain Government

does not implement the decisions of its parliament or the rulings of its courts. If those who criticize other States and demand that they launch reforms and embark on democratization refuse to accept, in making such demands, that the General Assembly become a genuine legislative body, with the Security Council serving as its executive tool, and refuse to respect the decisions of international judicial organs, their criticism of non-democratic States will be devoid of any validity and will have no logical basis.

The General Assembly, which in reality constitutes the totality of the countries united for the sake of peace, has lost its significance. It is, in fact, much marginalized in the Charter and treated like a minor, in need of patronage. Most articles of the Charter, in fact, seem to attach little importance to the role of the Member States represented in the General Assembly, as it cannot really enforce anything unless approved, authorized or recommended by the Security Council. It is well known that the Security Council is dictatorial in nature, whereas the General Assembly is democratic. The Security Council is a minority body resembling a dictatorial military council — a council for emergencies — and it really cannot have any pretence to democracy or equality.

It can be concluded, therefore, in the light of the above, that the world actually embodies, in its supreme organization, the United Nations, a most flagrant form of dictatorship. It makes little sense to talk about democracy and reform on any level unless we recognize this truth in our highest organization.

Moreover, there is a dilemma posed by granting new States permanent membership in the Security Council at a time when these States are becoming part of new unions. These unions are evolving year after year into single political entities resembling a single State, or actually turning into a single State. For example, the European Union is evolving gradually into a single State, or a union of States, but will have more than one seat on the Security Council. Similarly, a State member of the African Union may acquire a permanent seat, but at the same time it is part of a union evolving into a single political entity. Thus, would the seat be for the whole Union or for that country only, which will eventually be dissolved in the Union, or will the seat alternate among the members of the Union? However, if, for example, more than one African State were to obtain a permanent seat, the same dilemma as that faced with the EU would arise, namely, having several seats for the same political entity.

All world leaders, intellectuals, theoreticians and academics are called upon to study this proposal carefully before becoming entangled in hasty decisions, prompted by the desire to be courteous and conciliatory, oblivious to future horizons and long-term prospects, and to the negative repercussions that such decisions might entail.